INTERNATIONAL TRADE CENTRE

UNITED NATIONS CONFERENCE ON TRADE AND DEVELOPMENT

GENERAL AGREEMENT ON TARIFFS AND TRADE

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EVALUATION OF THE SERVICES OF THE INTERNATIONAL TRADE CENTRE FOR THE DEVELOPING COUNTRIES

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ALGERIA

The Ministry of Trade appreciates the work done by the Centre.

The services furnished to Algeria, as reported in the document annexed to the Centre's letter dated 29 August 1969, have consisted to date of five market studies for agricultural products, visits to Europe by two Algerian experts, and a mission to Algeria by two Centre experts, in 1966/67 and 1969, respectively.

In general we consider that the Market Information Service has done a substantial amount of research, analysis, and information work on subjects of interest to the trade promotion bodies of many countries.

The publication FORUM is undoubtedly of practical value for trade promotion services and constitutes a good information source because of the subjects selected as well as the quality of the articles. Nevertheless, we would like to suggest to the officers responsible for this publication that they should more frequently call on experts from developing countries whose contribution would certainly be very beneficial.

With respect to training, Algeria appreciates the value and importance of the programmes drawn up by the Centre; it would be opportune, however, to recall that at the last meeting a number of countries referred to the interest of organizing courses and seminars at regional or national level.

The services rendered by the experts provided by the Trade Promotion Advisory Service have yielded positive effects. The Centre should, nevertheless, pay attention to ensuring that the level and quality of these experts are more closely related to the nature and importance of the problems of the country to which they are assigned.

(Reply from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs received through UNDP Resident Representative.)

C H I L E

A. MARKET INFORMATION SERVICE AND JOINT PRODUCT PROMOTION

1. A knowledge of a foreign market is extremely important to a producer or exporter as it allows him to know the competition which his undertaking will meet as well as the potential demand for his products.

   Now, while they cater to the needs of producers and exporters, it should be pointed out that generally speaking many of the studies carried out deal with products which Chile has been exporting traditionally (fruits, leather and skins) or during the past five years (shrimps, crayfish), so that they are not as necessary to the exporters as would be the case if they dealt with markets for semi-manufactured or manufactured goods, a field in which countries such as ours have little experience, if any, and towards which the economy of developing countries is tending in accordance with the recommendations of economists over the past few years.

2. The most useful background material for an exporter is generally the "List of importers and agents" in a study, as this background material is used for making immediate contact with the foreign market. Also of interest is background material on:

   Estimates of future demand
   Background data on trade policy and regulations
   Trade circuits
   Product quality, sizes and packing
   Price trends and outlook
   Types of credit
   Advice about sales promotion and advertising requirements

   Although the background data indicated is the most important when current publications are difficult to obtain, the presentation of all the information you supply in a single text gives a more complete picture of the market analysed.

3. In general, a study covering the items which you mention in Point 2 gives a sufficiently broad view of the possibilities of entering, and competing in, a given foreign market.

4. We do not know of any concrete cases of increased exports, as generally the background material which you supply in the studies is used by the exporters themselves, who do not consider it necessary to inform us whether they have derived any advantage from it.

5. Apart from the observation made in answering Question 1 of this questionnaire, it is felt that the studies which you prepare should be more widely circulated and that their importance in the field of trade promotion should be made known to exporters.

B. PUBLICATIONS PROGRAMME

(a) FORUM and its Commercial Policy Supplement

1. Because of the articles which appear in it, the magazine FORUM can be regarded as unique, since it contains varied and up to date information on what is happening in international marketing.

2. From the articles in the magazine it is possible to obtain a broad view of all aspects of export promotion which call for consideration, and also ideas on organizing programmes for collecting market information and on other matters of real interest for the implementation of an export promotion policy.

3. Descriptions of national markets
Descriptions of developing countries' export promotion efforts and techniques
Stories about export experience of individual companies in developing countries
In mentioning these subjects we do not mean that the others are of no interest as, in fact, they are all important for keeping one informed about the techniques used in export promotion.

4. It is true that there are subjects which deserve full treatment in a single issue in order to give an overall view, and to these a special issue could be devoted; but, in practice, the present composition and layout of the magazine are fairly good.

5. We feel that it would be of interest to deal in forthcoming issues with practical ways of obtaining market information, or, in general, with ways of creating an export mentality in the manufacturing sector.

6. The presentation of the magazine seems to us all right as it is.

(b) Handbooks

1. The handbooks published so far have met the need for a knowledge of the practical aspects of export promotion and have provided information on the techniques used in other countries as well as being of use in training those employed in this field.

2. Both the presentation and subject matter of the handbooks seem satisfactory.

3. The information supplied by the handbooks, and the subjects they deal with, do not date as do the market studies, for which reason their up-dating is not so necessary. As regards their re-issue by the Centre, we do not consider it particularly necessary, as all the information which you publish can be translated and/or reproduced, in whole or in part, even without requesting previous permission, it only being necessary to quote the source; which means that each country can extract from the studies such material as is of interest to it and can circulate it as required.

4. On the whole, the handbooks published have been of considerable assistance in export promotion work.

5. (a) Manual on the Compilation of Basic Information on Export Markets
Manual: Export Marketing Research for Developing Countries
The Organization of Trade Missions
Compendium of Sources: Basic Commodity Statistics, and International Trade Statistics
A Bibliography of Market Surveys
A Select Bibliography for Export Promotion Services in Developing Countries

(b) We are particularly interested in handbooks which describe market survey methods and techniques to be used for detecting foreign demand or encouraging production for export.

6. The subjects to be included in future handbooks, in accordance with our needs as mentioned earlier, will continue the effective work being done in the field of export promotion.

7. (a) Export Incentives
Export Finance and Credit Insurance
The Organization of Commercial Information
The Organization of Quality Control and Standard-Setting Systems

(b) Of the handbooks mentioned, the subjects which most interested us were those connected with the organization of commercial information and export incentives.

8. Other subjects of interest would, for example, be connected with the operation of credit insurance and quality controls for exportable products.

(Letter from the Permanent Representative of Chile to the GATT)

I N D I A

A. MARKET INFORMATION SERVICE AND JOINT PRODUCT PROMOTION

1. Yes, but only to a limited extent.

2. Information regarding commercial policy and fiscal measures, other trade regulations, etc., in the Centre's studies is most useful.

3. The market studies should give information and suggestions on product promotion through mutual co-operation among developing countries.

4. The Centre has taken up market studies in respect of electric motors, electric fans, sewing machines and railway products at India's request. These studies have been found extremely useful in highlighting the deficiencies in our trade effort.

5. India made requests for major market surveys in respect of sixteen commodities. Mr. Dale of ITC who visited India in 1968 identified twelve products for market study, major or small, by the Centre. Of all these items, the Centre has completed studies partially in respect of only five products. The Centre should complete the studies in hand and also take up the remaining products for study on priority bases.

   The coverage of the Centre's market studies should be as broad-based as practicable. Normally the Centre confines the major product surveys to West European markets. The usefulness of these surveys will be greater if they are extended to other countries also.

   The present programme of the Centre does not include any arrangement for promoting exports among developing countries inter se. Such arrangements could be started with conducting major surveys of markets in developing countries for selected items of export interest to one or more developing countries.

B. PUBLICATIONS PROGRAMME

(a) FORUM and its Commercial Policy Supplement

1. Yes. The usefulness of the magazine will be greater if it is made available to the developing countries as media for advertising their goods. A repetitive image of an object has an effective publicity value. The same products, therefore, should be advertised in every issue of the FORUM and its supplements over a long period.

2. The magazine FORUM has been generally found very useful in analysing trade promotion activities by decision making levels.

3. (a) Market surveys for specific products.
(b) Descriptions of developed countries' export promotion efforts and techniques.
(c) Technical articles on different aspects of exporting.
(d) Modern marketing techniques.
(e) Lists of sources of information.

4. India prefers issues with short articles to be supplemented from time to time by issues devoted to single subjects of topical interest to developing countries.

5. The future issues of FORUM should publish as a regular feature, the price movements in developed countries, of commodities of interest to developing countries. The magazine and its supplements should also provide on a regular basis factual information on the physical infra-structure, marketing system and the trade and tariff policies followed by each developed country in respect of major commodities.

6. Factual data contained in section "Commercial policy Chronicle" is extremely useful.

(b) Handbooks

1. Some of the publications have been extremely useful to India in her trade promotion activities.

2. Yes; but there is still scope for improvements.

3. The publication "Manual of Export Promotion Techniques" should be brought up to date. Besides, giving the export promotion techniques utilized by the developed countries, the publication should include information on the working of these techniques in practice. There should be a sales outlet for these books as at least a hundred to two hundred copies are required by various exporting interests. Sales have to be in the currency of the country concerned.

4. These publications as a whole will be extremely useful to India.

5. (a) The subjects of organization and management of joint export marketing and multinational product promotion are of special interest to India.

(b) India is specially interested in the solution of problems of realization of higher unit value of products marketed jointly by developing countries in the developed country markets.

6. The subjects are generally useful to India.

7. (a) Priority should be given to subjects - export incentives, export finance and export publicity.

(b) Effectiveness of various export incentive measures in the context of the peculiar circumstances prevailing in developing countries deserves to be emphasized.

8. Structural changes in the import trade of developed countries.

C. TRAINING PROGRAMME

1. India's participation in training programmes and seminars organised by the Centre has helped the participants to pick up new trends and ideas for use in her economic activity and export promotion. These programmes also provide opportunities to the participants to compare India's methods and efforts with those of other countries.

2. The standard has been generally satisfactory.

3. At present the seminars are held mostly in the developed countries. It would add considerably to the knowledge and experience of Governments and trade in the developing countries if such seminars are arranged more and more in the developing countries.

4. The nominees from India to the programmes organized by the Centre have received useful training. The present programme of the Centre to impart training in export promotion to personnel from the developing countries should be widened. More opportunities for giving training to officers from India at the policy-making level is an urgent need. Besides, India would like to avail the training programmes organized for homogenous groups of officials from one country alone, since such programmes will be directed to the peculiar needs of the country.

D. TRADE PROMOTION ADVISORY SERVICE

1. Generally the trade promotion advisory service of the Centre is satisfactory. It should, however, take into account the possibility of trade promotion in the case of particular products through mutual co-operation among developing countries.

2. The technical assistance rendered by the export promotion experts and advisers is of high standard and quality.

3. The services have generally been found useful in organizing export promotion activities in the respective fields.

4. The Centre should work out integrated programmes for each developing country on the basis of the requirements of the country.

5. Greater emphasis should be laid on the product promotion through mutual co-operation among developing countries.

(Reply received from the Permanent Mission, Geneva.)

N I G E R I A

A. MARKET INFORMATION SERVICE AND JOINT PRODUCT PROMOTION

1. Yes, it does.

2. Product specifications
Estimates of future demand
Information on the relative position of competing products and suppliers
Information regarding commercial policy and fiscal measures, other trade regulations, etc.
Freight rates and transport costs and facilities
Information on quality, dimensions, packaging, etc.
Price trends and outlook
Terms and conditions governing credit, contracts, arbitration, payment, insurance, etc.
Advice about sales promotion and advertising requirements
List of importers and agents

3. What the Centre does, at the moment, to us, appears adequate.

4. Evaluation of the Centre's Market Information Service is not easy as the Nigerian Government does not export and does not at the moment require businessmen to furnish us with Returns or Results of the export promotion information which they receive from the Centre through this Ministry.

5. We in Nigeria, require more addresses of European importers of tropical products. Majority of our exporters are yet to appreciate the intrinsic value of sophisticated export promotion techniques though advertising is coming in a good way. They assess techniques in terms of the more immediate results. Businessmen throng our office asking for Trade Introductions or connexions with overseas importers. Considering our present stage of development, the more addresses of overseas importers of tropical products we receive from the Centre, the better. Here and there, we have Nigerian businessmen who have both the means and the ability to take full advantage of the export promotion techniques published by the Centre, but in making our recommendations or suggestions, we are guided wholly by the plight of the majority of Nigerian businessmen.

B. PUBLICATIONS PROGRAMME

(a) FORUM and its Commercial Policy Supplement

1. Yes

2. Yes, especially through our Trade Fairs and Exhibitions Section.

3. (a) Commercial Policy Chronicle
   (b) Market surveys for specific products
   (c) Descriptions of national markets
   (d) Descriptions of developed countries' export promotion efforts and techniques
   (e) Technical articles on different aspects of exporting
   (f) Stories about export experiences of individual companies in developing countries

4. Fewer long articles especially on single subjects.

5. Feature article on secondary or lesser known export products of each of the developing countries.

6. The magazine is, in our view, good if one is talking about the quality of the articles therein.

(b) Handbooks

1. Yes.

2. Yes.

3. "Manual of Export Promotion Techniques" keeping in view of the problems of an exporter in a developing country who has no money to invest in advertising or research. Most businesses in Nigeria are small businesses and few of the exporters can afford to wait for results of export promotion. Prospects of receiving immediate cash offer the only attraction to a great majority of our exporters.

4. Yes.

5. (a) (i) Export Promotion - a systematic approach
   (ii) Official Commercial Representatives abroad
   (iii) Export Promotion by private sector organizations
   (iv) Organization and Management of joint export marketing

   (b) .....

6. Yes.

7. (a) (i) Export incentives
   (ii) Export finance
   (iii) The Organization of Commercial Information

   (b) Yes - Export finance and incentives

8. As already indicated in question 5 on page 11 which deals with the special needs of my country.

C. TRAINING PROGRAMME

1. Yes

2. (i) Yes

(ii) Yes, but not as good as the training organized by the Centre in conjunction with St. Gall University.

3. See comments below

4. Yes

D. TRADE PROMOTION ADVISORY SERVICE

1. Yes

2. No

3. The impact is not at the moment as pervasive as one would wish.

4. See below for comments.

5. See below for comments.

COMMENTS

There is no doubt whatsoever that the Centre's Training Programme, especially the one carried out in conjunction with St. Gall University, meets a definite need in the export promotion efforts of Nigeria and, in fact, every developing country. The crucial problem is that officers who receive this excellent training should be given assignments by their Governments which deal with export promotion. If this is not ensured, it will be tantamount to an unfortunate waste of expertise, especially in many developing West African countries which need this valuable trained manpower.

Suggestion: Governments of developing countries should be made to realise that the Trade Centre's efforts to encourage the development and expansion of export trade will be wasted if no use is made of the training given by the Centre to officers from these countries. This can be done by a circular letter from the Centre addressed to Ministers of Trade/External Affairs in these countries.

Developing countries should in future be asked to send officers for training who are in (a) their economic Ministries, (b) Chambers of Commerce, (c) State Marketing Organizations or co-operatives. The idea should be to give the training to officers who should be in a position to serve the business community in their respective countries.

(Reply received from the Federal Ministry of Trade through the UNDP Resident Representative.)

TUNISIA

A. MARKET INFORMATION SERVICE AND JOINT PRODUCT PROMOTION

1. We feel that the market information supplied by this service meets the specific needs of producers and consumers. In fact market studies such as those on Fresh Fruit and Vegetables, Shrimp and Prawns, Citrus Juices, and Table Wine are of particular interest to our exporters as they cover products which are among those we export.

   These market studies would be even more useful if they were not confined to European countries.

2. Of the information which is normally contained in the Centre's studies, the following is of most use to us:

   Background data and general economic indicators
   Statistical data on international trade in the products concerned
   Consumption data, consumers' preference and end users' preference
   Estimates of future demand
   Information on the relative position of competing products and suppliers
   Description and analysis of the distribution networks of importing countries
   Information on quality, dimensions, packaging, etc.
   Price trends and outlook
   Advice about sales promotion and advertising requirements

3. Although the studies are for the most part complete, they might, in so far as possible, also include other items of market information, i.e. import régimes, sanitary regulations, seasonal consumer behaviour, possible competing offers throughout the year, etc.

4. At the present time, it is difficult to give any concrete examples of how the Centre's Market Information Service has contributed directly or indirectly to increasing Tunisian exports. We are, nevertheless, convinced that this will soon come about, now that exporters are being made aware of and led to utilize the information supplied by the International Trade Centre.

5. Apart from its current activities, the Centre's Market Information Service could, to meet certain needs peculiar to Tunisia, carry out market studies on typically Tunisian products, such as bottled wines, basket work, cork and cork products, earthenware sanitary articles and handicraft products, etc.

B. PUBLICATIONS PROGRAMME

(a) FORUM and its Commercial Policy Supplement

1. FORUM is of undoubted practical value to Tunisian trade promotion services and exporters by virtue of its regular information on trade policy in other countries and its articles on various export problems and the experience of other countries in this field.

2. The information provided in FORUM has not, to our knowledge, led to the establishment of fruitful relations resulting in increased trade nor to any concrete trade promotion action, but we feel that this will come about in time.

3. The subjects or types of articles which we feel could be useful are as follows:

Descriptions of developed countries' export promotion efforts and techniques
Technical articles on different aspects of exporting
Modern marketing techniques
List of sources of information
Market surveys for specific products

4. If possible, we should like to see both short articles on specific questions and long articles on general subjects included in FORUM.

5. The subjects which we should like to see dealt with in future issues of FORUM cannot easily be set out in full, but we might make the following suggestions:

The experience of other countries in the field of finance and export credit
The problems of co-ordinating and organizing export services at the national level
Possibilities for, and means of implementing, multi-national export promotion (e.g. the case of the countries of the Maghreb)
A comparative study of consumer tastes in packaging and the presentation of goods in several different countries

6. The publication would be of greater use if it were issued more frequently. In fact, the three months' interval seems to be very long, especially as certain items of information sometimes lose their topicality as they become outdated by the time they are published. Monthly issues are to be recommended.

(b) Handbooks

1. We consider that the publications mentioned in the questionnaire are useful in connexion with Tunisia's trade promotion needs and efforts.

2. We are satisfied with the presentation which is definitely improving, and we think that the coverage is complete.

3. It would be as well if some of those publications were brought up to date and republished. That applies to the following:

A Select Bibliography for Export Promotion Services in Developing Countries
A Bibliography of Market Surveys by Products and Countries
Compendia of Sources: Basic Commodity Statistics, and International Trade Statistics
Manufacturing and Trading Associations in Twenty-Eight Countries
Foreign Trade Enterprises in Eastern Europe
Foreign Trade Enterprises in Yugoslavia

In bringing those publications up to date, missing information should be added and information of no further use, removed.

4. We consider that, as a whole, the publications mentioned in the questionnaire could be useful in our present trade promotion activities.

5. It is recommended that special priority be given to the following subjects:

Export Promotion - A Systematic Approach
Organization and Management of Joint Export Marketing
Multinational Product Promotion
Trade Fairs and Exhibitions Guide
Designing products for Export Markets
Packaging for Export Markets
Standardization and Quality Control for Exported Products
Information on Trade Regulations - Guide to sources
Bibliography of Product and Industry Journals

It does not, however, seem to be necessary to stress any particular aspect of the subjects mentioned above.

6. As well as the publications mentioned above, the subjects listed for future publications could also be of service to Tunisia in the field of trade promotion.

7. The subjects which are of particular interest to us are:

Export Finance
The Organization of Commercial Information
Export Publicity
Bibliography on Marketing

C. TRAINING PROGRAMME

1. We feel that the Centre's Training Programme meets Tunisian export promotion requirements.

2. We are satisfied with the standard and quality of the training given, either directly by the Centre or through institutions in developed countries.

3. We think it is desirable that the Centre should agree to train Tunisian trainees in its offices, under the training scheme. That method appears to us much more efficient and possibly more profitable to the Centre.

4. We are convinced that the training received by Tunisian trainees has made them better equipped for their export promotion work.

D. TRADE PROMOTION ADVISORY SERVICE

1. We think that the way in which this advisory service operates in giving technical assistance in trade promotion is suited to the needs of the developing countries in this field.

2. We have no special comments to make on the standard or quality of the experts sent to Tunisia. However, we should like experts who come in the future to be, in so far as possible, technicians and not theoreticians.

3. The services already provided by the Centre in this very special field have had a positive effect, as we have already organized an export promotion training scheme and we hope to create and organize an export problem documentation service.

4. We should like to see more missions to developing countries included in the improvements in the present activities of the Centre.

5. We think that it would also be desirable and useful for the Centre to create other small centres, if not in each country, at least in each region (the Maghreb, for example).

These secondary centres would set up the four services already in existence in the Centre inself in each country, in collaboration with the Centre in Geneva. In this way the work of the Centre would, in the long run, be lightened.

(Reply from the Ministry of Trade and Industry)

UPPER VOLTA

The Ministry of Finance and Trade informs me that the present structure of Upper Volta's foreign trade does not permit them to give a detailed reply to the questions you posed concerning the evaluation of the assistance provided by the Centre in certain fields.

However, the Ministry wishes to let you know that the Government shows much interest to the Centre publications.

I am sorry not to be able to give a more detailed answer.

(Reply received from the UNDP Resident Representative)